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gfiles
INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT
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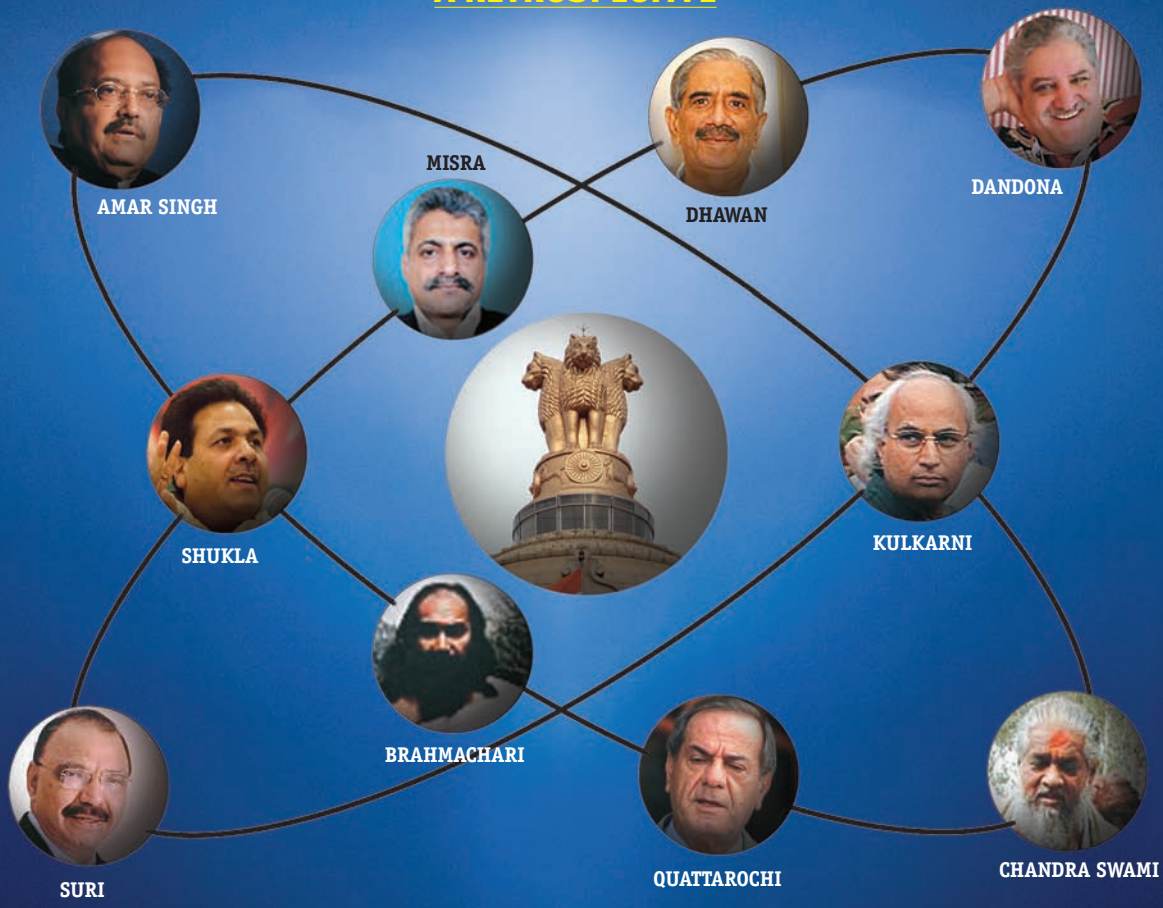
THE FIXERS

Like Amar Singh, these individuals had a shelf life, but starting from the days of Indira Gandhi their guile, wile, wit and cunning have moved and shaken governments

A RETROSPECTIVE



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A true servant of the public

It is a matter of grave concern for all of us ("When a head rolls...", *gfiles*, May 2010). Civil servants are servants of the public mainly on paper as the politicians are the representatives of the public but they forget the masses once they are elected.

A person like Jasbir Singh Bir has taken an initiative for the cause of the public and he has to sacrifice his job. Is it not a shame for the public in general and civil servants and politicians in particular? I can imagine the humility and trauma being faced by this person but what is the outcome? Let us all request Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal not to accept Bir's resignation. It will give a moral boost not only to Bir but to many other Birs.

B Singh, on blog

Bir is an honest person and very close to poor people instead of being a high-class bureaucrat. It is a shame that the government is giving so much tension and pressure to an honest officer. He is doing good for the public and does not have personal interests at heart.

Lily, on blog

The present SAD-BJP government has exemplified the unbecoming misuse of power to attain undue favours and break the chain of command in the disciplined civil services of the state. It is yet another saddening moment to note that an officer of Commissioner level has had to quit for having the courage to get buses belonging to the Chief Minister's family dislodged for illegal parking. This is not a new thing, but it's high time we understand and realize the true colours of the polity.

Sir [Jasbir Singh Bir], it is immensely courageous of you to have held your ground, you are the beacon which will light the path to banishment of corruption of politicians.

Manpreet Kaur, on blog

For more readers' reactions on blog, log on to gfilesindia.com

Eliminate Naxalites

The Naxalites killing 76 CRPF men is no less than an open war ("Government on a booby trap?"). The government must act as in a war situation. It is worse than Taliban attacks. All strong and possible measures to end this menace forever must be taken. When India has won wars against another country in the past why cannot Naxalites be eliminated forever? Air attack / military attack and all other similar measures must be used. Also, measures should be taken for long-term planning so that such problems do not occur in the future like overall economic development of all parts of the country and provision of employment and so on.

M Kumar, via email

Shailaja's travails

A hilarious piece ("Choppering out of a glass ceiling", April 2010)! Shailaja, one never knew that you were capable of producing such superlative stuff. Please write more such articles.

PC Cyriac, on blog

Radio for all

It is a matter of pleasure that Tilonia has its own community radio ("Of them, by them, for them...", March 2010). I have experience in running the FM radio station of AIR and the community radio station at Banasthali Vidyapith. I run an institution imparting training for radio production. It would be my pleasure if you utilize my services.

Avdhesh Kumar Sharma, on blog

Pep up stock column

Can we have some star performer in the current bearish trend in the stock commentary?

Rajesh Sharma, on blog

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From the Editor-in-Chief

IN all my years as a journalist, the rare occasion when the Indian public seemed united in applauding the choice of a person for high office was the selection of Manmohan Singh as Prime Minister by the Congress party. I doubt that most people who hailed this pick did so because of any elaborate study, leave alone perusal, of the good doctor's resume. Even a cursory glance at his curriculum vitae is enough to convince anybody that, as far as credentials go, he is probably the most erudite, educated, high-achieving leader in the world. There is no column in that resume, however, that lists the quality for which Manmohan Singh received the public's hosannas: honesty.

There is a supreme irony in India's modern polity: the more the public seems to become inured to rampaging corruption and venality, the greater its reverence and adulation for probity—virtuousness, sincerity, integrity, uprightness, rightness, worth, and morality. This is in sharp contrast to what seems a universally defeatist, fatalistic, *chalta hai* acceptance of institutions of governance falling like ninepins under the assault of an unstoppable bowling ball of dishonesty, sleaze, bribery, fraud and vice.

No institution seems to have been spared—Parliament, the judiciary, the bureaucracy, the defence forces, the police, the security establishment, NGOs, corporate houses. So, once again, it comes as that rare surprise when a new appointment or the elevation of a serving official to a higher post draws praise or even a sigh of relief from traditional cynics.

The example at hand is the recent appointment of Sarosh Homi Kapadia as Chief Justice of India. Despite widespread criticism of the Judiciary for its manifest failings and the lapses of individuals sitting on various benches across the country, it remains the penultimate defensive weapon – the people's weapon – against Executive excesses, violation of human rights, ecological and environmental havoc, business malpractices, consumer manipulation, and social and economic inequities. Its chief can set the tone for the entire nation.

And in Kapadia, as Sarita Tanmay writes in her assessment of this remarkable man in the current issue of *gfiles*, India may well have in the Judiciary what it has in the person of Manmohan Singh in the Executive. The judge, whose term will last a little over two years, is the first Chief Justice of India to have been born after Independence. And, it seems, he means business.

He shot into prominence as a special judge appointed to prosecute the 1999 stock exchange scam. He is a strict constructionist of the Constitution who, colleagues say, "believes in perfection and will tolerate no nonsense". He comes from a poor family and started his career as a Class IV employee. "The only asset I possess," he once wrote, "is integrity."

Welcome to your new position, Your Honour, and for the sake of our country may you be a Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!

INDERJIT BADHWAR

THE DAY OF THE FIXER

THE fixer has become a fixture in the shadowy world of Indian governance. Even though this unique position finds no mention in the official lexicography of India's polity, it has come to occupy an institutionalized status in the affairs of state. The individual occupants, however, have a shelf life. While they are needed, they are larger than life, more powerful than politicians, more omniscient than bureaucrats. Through channels unknown to Ministers, by the gift of the gab, through the knowledge of murky financial and personal secrets, through pretensions to guru-dom, through cajolery, blackmail and charm, they move mountains that Prime Ministers, Finance Ministers, Chief Ministers once thought unfeasible to budge.

Ultimately, however, these conjurers of the art of the impossible live out their life cycles. Some fade away without a whimper. Others, unaware of the ephemeral nature of their proxy-power, try to play for keeps by securing party positions or nominations to Parliament or starting successful businesses. Yet, no matter what garb they don later, they cannot metamorphose. They are like Cain, marked. They are never accepted into the true brotherhood – or oligarchy, if you will – of the very politicians, bureaucrats, and industrialists for whom they performed miracles. Despite his dynamism, brilliance in wile, network of friends, ability to throw upmarket soirées, bevy of glamorous women, when the time of the fixer is up, it is up. Ultimately, he is no more than a facilitator with neither dynastic nor grassroots mooring. He is a dealmaker. And when there are no more deals, or when he sees himself as kingmaker – or (heaven forbid!) king himself – he is dispensable. Like a wad of sullied tissue paper.

With the story of erstwhile Samajwadi Party supremo Amar Singh still fresh in the mind, **Inderjit Badhwar** *and* **Anil Tyagi** *look at the phenomenon of facilitators and their impact on Indian governance.*

Amar Singh... the historical cog

IN the saga of facilitators, the career of Rajya Sabha MP and industrialist Amar Singh is not as unique as it is made out to be. Despite the fact that he played a massively powerful role – using all the political, persuasive, PR skills at his command – in helping push through the Indo-US nuclear deal for the ruling party, his rise and eclipse as a fixer have followed predictable patterns. Had he had the sense of humour to view himself as no more than one more historical cog in the endlessly turning wheel of India's murky politics, he would probably have been able to avoid the hubris from which emanates, now, so much sorrow over betrayals by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav, Jaya Bachchan and, not least, Sonia Gandhi and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh whose government he saved from collapse after the Left pulled the plug.

Amar Singh's persona, however, was special – a cut high above the wheelers and dealers who have preceded him on the stage of power. He was, and is, a great listener, feisty, never servile or pusillanimous. He learned about the importance of the facilitator while working unofficially as a liaison man for KK Birla, Shobhana Bhartiya, and her husband, Shyam: He learned that even KK, whose family had virtually bankrolled the Congress party from its inception, and his media-savvy and socially active daughter, Shobhana, could do very little themselves to move the bureaucracy or

Amar Singh's speciality lay in combining politics with a glamour quotient. He picked this up from Subrata Roy. He learned about the importance of the facilitator while working unofficially as a liaison man for KK Birla and Shobhana Bhartiya.

...IT'S THE SHELF LIFE, STUPID!

Ministries, whether in matters of newsprint purchase, industrial licensing changes, or achieving price decontrol for molasses in Gajraula (Uttar Pradesh) factories run by KK's son-in-law, the dashing, Errol Flynn-moustachioed Shyam, or helping Shobhana get rid of white elephant Home TV (ultimately purchased by Amar Singh confidant Subrata Roy of Sahara). They all needed middle men with extraordinary powers of persuasion at every level of government.

It was from late hotelier Lalit Suri, a friend of Sanjay and Rajiv Gandhi, and a recipient of land for Bharat Hotels as a real estate boondoggle from the Congress party, and a monopoly outlet for Maruti cars, that Amar Singh picked up the finer part of durbar politics, and the art of raising and distributing party finances fairly without annoying the top. As he became "dispensable" to the Birla clan with liberalization picking up, he veered closer to the Thakur brigade that ran Mandal politics, including Amethi Raja Sanjay Singh and Mulayam Singh who picked up the reins of UP's Yadav politics after Congressman Vir Bahadur Singh's untimely demise.

Amar Singh's speciality lay in combining politics with a glamour quotient. Some say he picked this up from Subrata Roy, the one-time flamboyant and now somewhat reclusive "Sahara Shree" of the Sahara group whose entire business USP was a combination of low-to-mid-income non-banking financial "*bhaiyya*" depositors from eastern UP and Bihar along with the glamour of the Bachhans, Sushmita Sen, Raj Babbar, Kavita Krishnamurthy, Kapil Dev, Ajay Jadeja, Subhash Ghai, Aishwarya Rai and Swapna Bannerjee. Others claim that Amar Singh was a fanatical Bollywood buff and star autograph-hunter from childhood. He could rattle off film dialogue after having seen the movie just once. It was Amar Singh, his friends say, who came to Amitabh Bachchan's aid, with no strings attached, when the Big B's ABCL Ltd was in trouble and the superstar was in debt. They claim that Amar Singh was Subrata Roy's Bollywood connection, and not the other way around.

Similarly, there's debate about who brought the Ambanis into the Mulayam Singh camp. Subrata Roy's friends say that "Sahara Shree" was greatly admired by the late Dhirubhai Ambani who often sought his advice on how to maintain company discipline as well as on investment matters. Anyway, the story is that UP needed investment and a good image, Mulayam loved Amar Singh, Amar Singh loved Amitabh, Dhirubhai (and later Anil Ambani who set up a power project in Dadri on the Delhi-UP border), Subrata Roy, and Aishwarya Rai like a daughter and Abhishek Bachchan like a son. And they all came together as one big happy family.

Until, one day, Amar Singh found himself dispensed with. Political analysts like Vir Sanghvi are guessing that Amar Singh will be back in the Samajwadi Party, larger than life. Gourmet Sanghvi forgets that once you suck the pulp off the mango seed, you don't put the seed back in your mouth. You spit it out. To change the metaphor, it's the shelf life, stupid!

Kapoor and Dhawan... the dancing needles

THE facilitator emerges, struts about the stage and then, poof! He vanishes like Cinderella's fairy godmother's pumpkin carriage. In post-Independence Indian politics the culture of the top wheeler-dealer took root in Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's time. She needed personally loyal fixers to ward off and survive the onslaughts of the Congress Old Guard led by stalwarts like Morarji Desai and Jagjivan Ram.

Enter Yashpal Kapoor. This PA-like character understood the symbolic emanation of power. He kept Chief Ministers as also senior bureaucrats waiting outside his house for hours for a five-minute audience. For 16 uninterrupted years Kapoor

Dhawan had a boyish Punjabi look and Karol Bagh accent, a shock of black hair fell over his forehead. He enjoyed the untrammelled confidence of Mrs Gandhi because he never exceeded his brief and knew how to kow-tow to Sanjay.

managed the affairs of the PMO, along with RK Dhawan. Dhawan, with his boyish Punjabi looks and Karol Bagh accent, a determined moustache, and a shock of black hair that fell over his forehead, was the political secretary and chief of staff. They enjoyed the untrammelled confidence of Mrs Gandhi because they never exceeded their brief and knew how to kowtow to Sanjay Gandhi's extra-constitutional authority.

Dhawan's influence, however, never carried into the Rajiv Gandhi years. He was like a beached whale and later faced opprobrium when the Thakkar Commission of Inquiry into Indira Gandhi's assassination pointed the "needle of suspicion" at Dhawan for allegedly changing the guard's duties on the day she was shot. The last image of Dhawan that people remember was that of a bald aging man – tonsured in a religious ceremony – walking out of Tirupati.

While the Kapoor-Dhawan duo managed Mrs Gandhi's appointments and guarded her political manoeuvres from sabotage, a facilitator from Bihar, Lalit Narain Mishra, emerged. Few people know that Mishra discovered the talent of Dr Manmohan Singh. The latter was first appointed by Mishra as an adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Trade. Mishra became so powerful that, with Yashpal Kapoor's help, he dethroned Haryana Chief Minister Bhagwat Dayal Sharma and managed to get Bansi Lal appointed.

Lal never looked back. He did not need to, backed as he was by one of Mrs Gandhi's most powerful secret fund raisers with influence in industrial houses and dominant bureaucratic circles. According to Mitrokhin Archive, money was paid by the KGB to the Congress party through conduits like Railway Minister Lalit Narain Mishra, who was also said to have accepted large bribes from the KGB. He died mysteriously in a bomb blast at Samastipur, Bihar, in 1975.

Brahmachari... the yogi as commissar

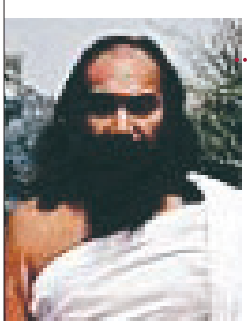
POLITICIANS and babus were not the only ones who qualified during this great era of fixers. Yogis also had their say. The most formidable among them was Dhirendra Brahmachari who was born in a village, Dhanushi Chanpura, in Madhubani, Bihar. Brahmachari left home at the age of 13 to study at Varanasi before parachuting into Delhi's power corridors and becoming a top acolyte of Mrs Gandhi.

He died in 1994 when his private plane crashed, an event still shrouded in mystery. Those who have witnessed that era can recall how a long row of imported cars was regularly parked at his ashram in Delhi's Friends Colony. His lust for power, pelf and women was unparalleled. He seduced most of his contacts with his resounding voice, persona and the mystique surrounding his brand of yoga. He enjoyed privileged entry at Mrs Gandhi's residence. He amassed unaccounted wealth and set up a gun manufacturing factory and five-star yoga centres in Mantalai (J&K). But he never aspired to be a politician.

Capt Sharma... piloting more than one ship

DURING the Rajiv Gandhi years the long arm of liaison reached all the way to New York. This was way before NRIs became politically "in" and PIO and OCI cards were given out in recognition of the Indian diaspora's collective political clout on behalf of the mother country. Certain trusted loyalists were assigned fund-raising tasks for the Congress party as well as looking after its leaders' interests in foreign deals. One such operator was Kamal Dandona. This New York-based entrepreneur was known for his generosity, his ready raucous laughter, strings of gold chains around his neck, gaudy Hawaiian shirts unbuttoned to display a hairy chest, and solid gold rings on both hands. Dandona was considered the Man Friday of the Hinduja brothers who were trying to make inroads into Rajiv Gandhi's coterie.

Operators like Dandona were obsessively secretive about their meetings with Rajiv Gandhi, admitting at most to having had his "blessing" to start a wing of the Congress party in the US. Until the Bofors scandal surfaced, Dandona visited Delhi almost evey other month.Perfunctorily, at least, he was constantly in touch with Rajiv's long-standing PAs, Vincent George and Madhavan. Actually, he reported directly to Capt Satish Sharma, Rajiv's former airline pilot buddy (now MP) who managed Rajiv's constituency and acted as personal secretary and confidant. Sharma was also trusted by Rajiv to disburse party funds to favoured candidates and his Dutch wife, Sterre, was an artist who was a personal friend



A row of imported cars was regularly parked at Brahmachari's ashram in Friends Colony. His lust for power, pelf and women was unparalleled. He seduced his contacts with his resounding voice, persona and the mystique of his brand of yoga.

Dandona (right) had a dual reporting assignment – one to Lalit Suri (left), the charming, generous-to-a-fault, genial hotelier who managed and financed the entire transportation logistics for the Congress party during elections

of Sonia Gandhi.

Actually, Dandona had a dual reporting assignment – the other one to Lalit Suri (with whom Sharma had a love-hate relationship), the charming, generous-to-a-fault, genial hotelier who managed and financed the entire transportation logistics for the Congress party during elections. Even though the mostly affable Suri had a bad temper after drinking, he was best known for not having made political enemies and his largesse often stretched to other parties, including the BJP. Indeed, he was a great source of political intelligence for Rajiv. He was easy to talk to, and people from all parties talked to him. Just before VP Singh broke with Rajiv and the Congress party over the HDW submarine and Bofors issues to form the Jan Morcha, Suri was the main person involved in trying to manage a last-minute patch-up. Until his sudden death in a London casino, Suri continued to be courted by Congress bigwigs like Oscar Fernandes, Ghulam Nabi Azad and Ahmed Patel.

Dandona was a big party-giver. His New York bashes included Bollywood superstars, US Senators and Congressmen, visiting Indian politicians and dignitaries, and Hollywood biggies like Sharon Stone and Richard Gere. Whenever Dandona visited Delhi, he came armed with photo albums bearing tesimony to his ascent of New York's party ladder. These albums impressed Delhi's politicians and bureaucrats to no small extent.

Another compulsive album-displayer (Lord this ... and Lady that ... and Sir this ... and His Excellency that ...) who made a bid to influence Delhi's power circles because of his proximity to Capt Sharma and, to an extent, Lalit Suri, was the burly, overweight Panjab University-educated London-based Rajpal Choudhury ("Chow"). Whenever he travelled in Manhattan, he used a black stretched Cadillac or Lincoln limousine equipped with a stereo and bar. He once published a magazine called *Delhi Recorder*. Though this was never confirmed, sources in the government say many of Choudhury's overseas activities were financed by funds from India's Cabinet Secretariat and that his information was passed on directly or indirectly to Rajiv Gandhi's coterie.

Pinaki and the Swami... Rasputin and the law

ANY twist or change in India's domestic political equations usually brings to the fore a bevy of fixers. Always one to be counted on is the ubiquitous lawyer, Pinaki Misra. His high point in palace politics was when PV Narasimha Rao became PM. But, with the ease of a chameleon, he switched loyalties between individuals, parties and leaders. He is a low-profile facilitator who knows how to move to the right place at the right time. He was elected to the 11th Lok Sabha during Narasimha Rao's tenure on a Congress ticket from Orissa with the help of JB Patnaik. Now a Member of the 15th Lok Sabha, he is a confidant of Orissa CM Navin Patnaik. He is reportedly Patnaik's Man Friday in Delhi.

Misra learnt the art of hobnobbing with politicians and bureaucrats from his one-time ring master, the infamous Nemi Chand Jain alias Chandra Swami. The latter, who has been in and out of jail, is considered one of the shrewdest and most malign influences in modern India's hall of influence-

Misra (left) represented Chandra Swami (right), who has been in and out of jail and is considered one of the shrewdest and most malign influences in modern India's hall of influence-peddling infamy.

peddling infamy. Born in Rajasthan, this veritable Rasputin rose to power during Janata Party rule. He travelled in private planes with Biju Patnaik, Devi Lal and Karpoori Thakur, and hobnobbed with Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar. He has holidayed and partied with international arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi, the Sultan of Brunei, former Foreign Secretary Romesh Bhandari and Washington socialite Steve Martindale, swinging international deals back and forth.

He hit it big when Narasimha Rao became PM, having uninterrupted access to the PM's house. Cabinet Ministers and top bureaucrats lined up at his Safdarjung Development Area residence to curry favour. He, too, had a shelf life.

The Q... catch as catch can

FACILITATORS share one quality: the insight – or foresight – to spot the political geniuses of the country. Jayant Malhotra and his wife, Badola, a business couple from Mumbai, set their sights on Dalit leader Kanshi Ram and his protégé, Mayawati. Initially, this shrewd couple had backed Ramakrishna Hegde, former Karnataka CM, and former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar as separate horses. They later shifted their sights to UP where they not only, to begin with, funded the BSP, but later also gifted a sea-facing flat in Mumbai to the party chief. So it was natural that, during Mayawati's first stint as CM, Jayant Malhotra enjoyed tremendous power and the fruits that went with it.

The Rajiv Gandhi era saw another prodigious international power-player descend on Delhi: an Italian named Ottavio Quattrocchi. As word of mouth had it, shivers would run down the spines of Ministers when Quattrocchi was on the line. They danced to his tunes. Quattrocchi wielded such influence with the PMO that most bureaucrats would stand up behind their desks when he visited them. It is also alleged that he could get Ministers and bureaucrats sacked if they ever dared challenge his authority.

This Italian businessman, representing Snamprogetti, eventually became one of the causes of the beginning of the sudden downfall of the Rajiv Gandhi government. He is rumoured to have won as many as 60 projects worth Rs 300 billion across Asian countries for Snamprogetti. It was also alleged in a case that he was the main conduit for the payment of bribes to secure the contract for the sale of Bofors field guns to India. With the twists and turns, Quattrocchi is either vindicated or damned to nobody's real satisfaction.

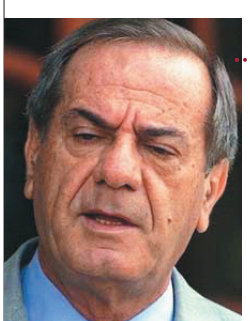
The Roulette... hit some, miss some

WITHIN this universe of come-and-go fixers is an enduring class of facilitators – like a permanent civil service available across the board. They manoeuvre in all political seasons though they may not have any particular constituency or any particular political party leader as their target. They are the likes of KC Tyagi, Sompal Singh, Virendra Dixit, Santosh Bharatiya and DP Tripathi. They surfaced suddenly during the Janata Party days. All became MPs at one time or another. Of them, Sompal was lucky to hit the jackpot and was inducted as a Minister in the Vajpayee government, besides being made a member of the Planning Commission. These facilitators have also been close to Mulayam Singh Yadav, VP Singh, LK Advani and Sharad Pawar. All of them can be seen flocking to the Constitution Club to attend some meeting or another.

When Atal Behari Vajpayee, the cleanest of all the Mr Cleans, became PM, the people heaved a sigh of relief. At last, a PMO sans fixers. They could not have been more wrong. A new tribe, just as powerful, emerged: Pramod Mahajan, Ranjan Bhattacharya, Dinanath Misra, and Balbir Punj were already on the podium to welcome the palm greasers. Mahajan, Misra and Punj all reportedly operated through Bhattacharya or Brajesh Mishra.

Misra and Punj were even able to acquire Rajya Sabha seats. The clout they enjoyed with the PMO and Advani from 1996 to 2004 was without parallel. A veteran like Dattopant Thengadi, a renowned labour leader and an RSS protégé, was compelled to complain to Vajpayee about the growing clout and baneful influence of these facilitators.

Another curious character, Sudheendra Kulkarni, came out of the blue and quickly took root in the Vajpayee and Advani camps. Kulkarni's rise was nothing short of meteoric. It was unusual for a BTech graduate from IIT Bombay in 1980 to become a journalist. Even more unusual was his association with two publications owned by Russy Karanjia – the *Daily*



Shivers would run down the spines of Ministers when Quattrocchi was on the line. It was rumoured he wielded such influence that he could get Ministers and bureaucrats sacked if they ever dared challenge his authority.

The diminutive pudgy-faced MP, Rajiv Shukla, known better for his sycophancy before Congress operatives, and being an informant for ML Fotedar, than for any story he ever wrote, is back from the wilderness as a player in the Rahul Gandhi camp.

and *Blitz* – that were radically chic in outlook. In the early 1990s, Advani visited Mumbai. At a press conference, he said he had no problems with intellectual disagreement, it was only misrepresentation of his views by the media that upset him. "I have, for instance, read Sudheendra*ji*'s article today. It is not favourable to us, but I liked what he wrote. It was provocative," Advani said. For Kulkarni, his journalistic odyssey had just commenced. He moved on, joining the Reliance-owned *Observer of Business and Politics* as an executive. He also worked with the Hindujas before being picked up by the powers-that-be in Delhi.

HE was made Director (Communications and Research) in the PMO. Because Vajpayee was strict about not allowing bureaucrats to attend party meetings, Kulkarni found himself uniquely placed to represent the party's views in the PMO and take the PMO's views to the party. When a fixer becomes a political guide, only disaster can follow. His lack of managerial capabilities was prominently on display during the elections in which the BJP suffered ignominy. His steadfast loyalty to the BJP's *Lohu Purush* – his mentor, Advani – turned quickly to disenchantment after the electoral debacle. Eventually, his career came full circle to square one. He is currently with Reliance Industries.

Another star-spotter, in the mould of the Malhotras, is Prem Chand Gupta, a former Minister for Corporate Governance at the Centre, the conscience-keeper and, reportedly, the purse-keeper of Lalu Prasad Yadav. This well-known figure among the colourful ranks of facilitators reached his fixing heights by brokering a de-merger settlement between the feuding Ambani brothers. A small-time watch manufacturer at Singapore, his eagle eye spotted Lalu, the rising star on the political horizon, and he lost little time in establishing himself in the good books of the Bihari politician. Though Gupta belongs to Jind district in Haryana, he is a Rajya Sabha member, thanks to his boss, from Bihar for the last three terms. Even if better fortune may have shunned Lalu for the moment, Gupta's loyalty to him remains impervious.

An interesting story doing the rounds in RSS circles concerns the amazing rise of Nishikant Dubey, a confidant of Rajnath Singh, ex-chief of the BJP, and of RSS acolyte Gurumurthy. Dubey was elected to the Lok Sabha from Godda constituency of Jharkhand on a BJP ticket. The man who arrived in Delhi wearing tattered slippers and lived in a *barsati* in South Avenue Apartments, climbed the ladder quickly to become a successful facilitator. He took little time in gaining the confidence and backing of one of India's biggest business houses. His declared worth is to the tune of Rs 11 crore. He is reportedly not only a part-time Director in ESSAR but also wields enormous power in Jharkhand to protect the interest of his mentors.

Under Nehru, none dared even breathe the tainted terms "dealmakers", "facilitators" and "fixers". The leadership was simple, honest and hardworking. Bureaucrats were a conscientious species. Nehru trusted his Chief Ministers and always remained in direct touch with them.

Most facilitators nurture no real commitment to any individual, party, ideology or even to the interests of the nation. Money is their be-all and end-all. They are survivors, come what may. Former Cabinet Secretary BG Deshmukh once told *gfiles* that Delhi was a town of "200 influential people", visibly pained while recounting the menacing influence of these facilitators on the bureaucracy of India.

Amar Singh once told a woman buddy from Bollywood: "When a leader is at the peak of power, exploit him to the hilt." More of his ilk will wax and wane, but the genes and character of the facilitator seem destined to live on in time, in one shape or another.

PS: One such mutation is erstwhile wheeler-dealer and former *Ravivar* journalist, the diminutive pudgy-faced MP, Rajiv Shukla, known better for his sycophancy before Congress operatives, and being an informant for ML Fotedar, and Gen Next leaders like the late Madhavrao Scindia, than for any story he ever wrote. An outsider for a while, he is back from the wilderness, not only as BCCI Vice-President despite the fact that he does not know a googly from a chinaman but, more important, as a player in the Rahul Gandhi camp. g

Walia's amusing ways

delhi minister forgets all

OFFICIALS in the Delhi government are agog over the state of health of Health Minister Kiran Walia. She has a peculiar habit of forgetting names and faces, and of arriving late at most functions, whether a "Clean Yamuna" campaign concert by Ravi Shankar or a social occasion.

At a social gathering at Oberoi Hotel, when she was leaving with fellow Minister Mangat Ram Singhal, she met a gentleman who knew her from the days when Prof VP Dutt, former Pro Vice Chancellor of Delhi University, groomed her as a lecturer in political science in Laxmibai College.

Pleasantries were exchanged and then she asked, "How is your family, judge sahib?" Those around lost their eyebrows. Singhal merely smiled as he knows her forgetfulness well. The gentleman is a journalist, not a judge.

Incidentally, this trait of Walia's is a constant source of amusement for Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit.

And quiet flows the money...

naxalites and high connections

IT is plain knowledge that it is impossible for the Naxalites to operate in isolation without the help of local, state and national politicians. Most of the top industrial houses are working in the Naxalism-affected areas, MPs and MLAs are being elected, MPLAD and NREGA funds are being diverted. One-third of India has no tax regime. Instead, a regime of extortion holds sway. This suits the Naxalites, politicians and industrialists well and is the country's biggest network for generating illegal money. In Chhattisgarh, everyone knows that former Chief Minister Ajit Jogi had well-established contacts with the Naxalites. Congress General Secretary Digvijay Singh knows better than any leader in Madhya Pradesh which group of Naxalites and which industrial houses are operating in the Naxalite-ridden areas in the state. In Andhra Pradesh, the late YS Reddy had the Naxalite leadership under his thumb.

In Bengal, at one time or another, Mamata Banerjee, Pranab Mukherjee and the top leadership of the CPI(M) have all put the Naxalites to political use. And, of course, everybody knows the fiery and outspoken P Chidambaram once represented a company called Vedanta which works in Naxalite-infested areas. Intelligence sources have a complete dossier about individuals' and industrial houses' Naxalite contacts. But who cares as long as the money flows?

Patel's tit for tat

crushes ai, indian unions

CIVIL Aviation Minister Praful Patel had long been waiting for the right moment to hammer the Air India unions. When they went on strike, it only strengthened his resolve to crush them. Now, why is Patel angry with them? Because, in the past year, the unions have exposed him.

All the unions of the Civil Aviation Ministry, Air India and Indian have written to the Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers, about his working pattern and alleged game plan to make Air India and Indian dead wood. These letters, which came as a shock to everybody in the government, served as a huge embarrassment for Patel but he could do little at the time as the unions exercised their right to send the letters. When they went on strike, he lost no opportunity in taking revenge.

ILLUSTRATIONS: ARUNA

Lanka-India bhai bhai

warm response to rajapakse

PUBLIC attention was focused on the nuts and bolts of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between India and Sri Lanka preceding President Mahinda Rajapakse's visit to India, but the backroom boys in both nations were busy negotiating proposals that could have an even more profound impact on future strategic ties between the two SAARC neighbours. After routing the LTTE, Rajapakse won a decisive Presidential victory and his party also trounced the opposition during parliamentary elections, leaving India with the belief that he can move rapidly not only on CEPA but also on the 13th Amendment devolving more power to the Tamil majority regions. The Sri Lankan President will move cautiously on both fronts because of domestic compulsions.

But to prove his genuine friendship for India and allay fears of China's growing influence in his country, Rajapakse has suggested India set up a full-blown space research centre in Sri Lanka secured by Indian security personnel, as well as help form an Indo-Sri Lankan Joint CEO Business Forum along the lines of a similar group created when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited the US during the Bush regime. A positive response to Rajapakse's feelers from the PMO kept the midnight oil burning. g

The regulatory RIGMAROLE

A jumble of rules and restraints stymie private initiatives to modernize the armed forces

by **Naresh Minocha**

Scorpene: submerging the rules?

IN May 2001, when the Cabinet opened up the defence sector to 100 per cent private investment and 26 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI), it could hardly have visualized that teething troubles would persist for so long. Yet, even today, private companies aspiring for a foothold in the defence sector face a number of obstacles. The foremost problem is that they have to wait a minimum of several months for security clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). The more unlucky ones wait a year or two, while for still others the ordeal is even longer.

It is perfectly in order that a corporate firm seeking involvement in the defence sector is required to go through a process of security clearance. The company, its shareholders and board of directors are all vetted and kept on the intelligence radar even after the initial security clearance. But is it right to make these private companies wait inordinately for the clearance?

Apart from security issues, licensing delays and project slip-ups have stalled several projects of both Indian private companies and multinational corporations (MNCs). These projects span a wide spectrum, from humble hand grenades to ultra-modern air defence missile systems.

Another constraint for the private sector is the stipulation that the management of joint ventures should be in Indian hands and the FDI stake should be limited to 26 per cent. But the government has not yet put in place a safeguards mechanism regarding the direct or indirect involvement of foreign companies in Indian private sector projects. Its regulations on this issue are evolving at a snail's pace.

Then there's lack of transparency, which continues to be the hallmark of the private sector's participation in this strategic business. Information about the total number of letters of intent issued, the status of implementation of approved projects, and the business interface between implemented projects and the armed forces is hard to come by.

The Department of Defence Production (DDP) has not made public the Vijay Kelkar Committee report of 2005 that proposed reforms in defence production. A major recommendation, accepted by the government, was granting of the status of Raksha Udyog Ratna (RUR) to select private companies that would compete on a level playing field with public sector producers in the field of large defence systems projects. Similarly, the DDP has not made available the report of the Prabir Sengupta Committee appointed to select RURs in 2006. It has never disclosed why it aborted the RUR concept.

Yet, private companies are perceiving a dim light at the end of the regulations tunnel as a result of some recent developments.

In March, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence disapproved of the Defence Ministry's attempt to obfus-

Endless circles

WHEN companies demerge their defence divisions into separate subsidiaries, they have to apply afresh for a letter of intent/industrial licence. Thus, they have to repeat the process of approval, including securing fresh clearances from the MHA as well as Department of Defence Production (DDP).

A case in point is that of Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M). Last year, the company demerged a part of Mahindra Defence Systems (MDS) into a wholly-owned subsidiary – Mahindra Defence Land Systems Private Limited (MDLSL). When M&M

A public interest case seeking institution of a criminal case against Thales Avionics S.A. in India's $3 bn Scorpene submarine deal is pending in court

cate the issue of creating a level playing field for the private sector vis-à-vis the Ordnance Factories Board (OFB) and defence public sector companies (DPSUs). The Standing Committee wants the private sector to have a share of technology transfer and indigenization of equipment in the government's mega purchases of military hardware. It said: "The Committee understand that it would always be safer to nominate DPSUs/OFBs as the primary receiver of such technology. However, the total denial of the opportunities to the private sector in this regard is not justified particularly when the specific provision has been made in the DPP (Defence Procurement Procedure). In view of this, the Committee while reiterating their earlier recommendation would like the Ministry to take concrete steps to involve the private sector."

Earlier, this January, Defence Minister AK Antony had promised improvement in defence procurement from the private sector. Noting that the defence market is big enough for both public and private sectors to flourish, he told an international seminar: "In this year's amendments (in the) DPP 2010, we must take two aspects seriously. One is avoiding delay in the procurement process. That is one aspect we are going to examine this time seriously; you can also do the same. Another is to speed it up judiciously. So I am sure DPP 2010 will address further your concerns."

Yet another ray of hope for the private sector has emerged from Udyog Bhavan. The Chairman of the Licensing Committee, an inter-ministerial panel serviced by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), recently echoed applicants' growing frustration over delays. At a Committee meeting on March 10, the Chairman, who is also DIPP Secretary, expressed concern about inordinate delay in issue of letters of intent. The Chairman's exasperation was due to DIPP's stock refrain in the case of over half-a-dozen applications that were put up for consideration at the meeting: "In spite of repeated reminders, the comments of MHA have not been received so far."

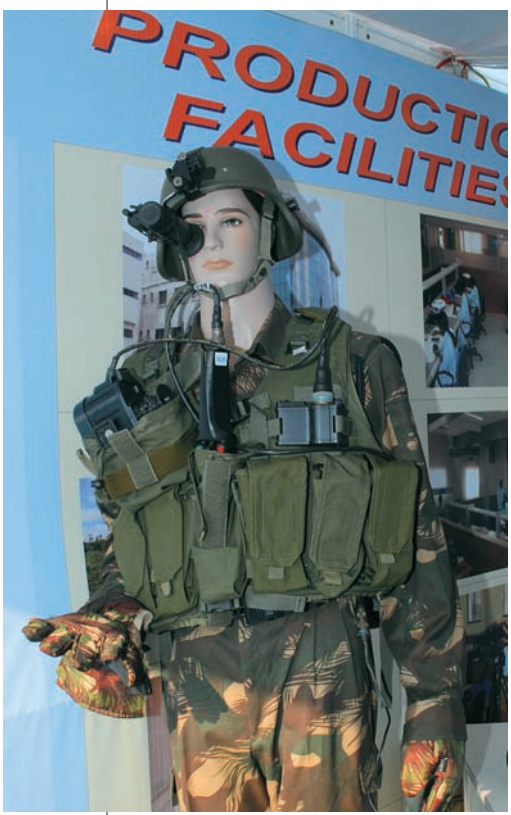
The Chairman laid down a new procedure for processing of applications at the meeting. The MHA is now required to give security clearance to an applicant company within three months from the date of receipt of reference from DIPP. If the MHA needs more time, it will have to seek an extension for each case from DIPP. If no request for extension is received, the Licensing Committee will presume clearance has been accorded.

THE new procedure also requires DIPP to place before the Licensing Committee all cases recommended by DDP. The committee will take a call on these cases after MHA scrutiny.

Yet, the MHA has had a positive role to play. It was MHA vigilance that led to the Licensing Committee and the Project Approvals Board (PAB) deferring a decision on Bharat Electronics Limited's twin applications for production of defence communication equipment in technical collaboration with

recently requested transfer of three licences for manufacture of mobile surveillance systems, military simulators and light armoured multi-role vehicles, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) told the company to apply for fresh licences. This is because the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951 does not include a provision on transfer of existing licences from the parent company to a new subsidiary.

Also,when the projects are not implemented in time, companies have to apply for extension of validity of the letters of intent. They then have to go through the process of approval all over again.



SHARAD SAXENA

The votaries of self-reliance believe alien service providers would let India down when war clouds gather

France's Thales Communications S.A. (TCSA). The Thales group is bribes scam-tainted. A public interest case seeking institution of a criminal case against Thales Avionics S.A. in India's $3 billion Scorpene submarine deal is pending before Delhi High Court. A notable though belated move on the MHA's part was the advice to DIPP to seek the Defence Ministry's guidance on specifying security and auditing procedure for the applicant firms. The MHA also proposed scrutiny of the supply chain to be used by the applicant.

The guideline says, "Adequate safety and security procedures would need to be put in place by the licensee once the licence is granted and production commences. These would be subject to verification by authorized Government agencies." This guideline is as lax and vague as the one on civilian-use explosives that frequently land up in the hands of terrorists and Naxalites. The guarding of explosives, from manufacture to delivery, is in the hands of company-hired private security guards. MHA guidelines stipulate escort of the explosives-carrying vehicle by at least two armed guards without elaborating further. It is anybody's guess whether the guards should be from private agencies or from the state police that hardly provides personnel with regular firearms training.

If the government does not put in place stringent security measures for private defence armament units, then grenades, anti-aircraft missiles, undersea mines, radio-equipment jammers and other warfare gear would slip into the hands of anti-national elements. g

Core security concerns

- As for the supply chain scrutiny, there is a real risk of foreign vendors embedding espionage software in the microelectronics components of electronic warfare and telecom equipment. It is anybody's guess whether Indian intelligence agencies are geared to take on anti-nationals in this endless game of dirty tricks. The acid test for foreign suppliers of technology, components and equipment would be only during war or during border conflict. The votaries of self-reliance believe alien investors, technology and component suppliers, and maintenance service providers would let India down when war clouds gather.
- In this context, a case unrelated to the defence sector is yet pertinent for its direct relevance to national security since many multinationals operate in both the industrial engineering and defence segments. US corporate giant General Electric, which produces gas turbines for power plants as well as aircraft, stopped sending its technicians to India when Indo-Pakistan tensions reached a flashpoint. This significant fact lies buried in the 2001-02 annual report of Search Chem Industries (later renamed United Phosphorous).
- The report says: "The engine of power plant has been re-commissioned on natural gas on 10th June, 2002 and is in operation since then. The power plant could have been started a bit earlier but GE, USA had banned travel by technicians to India, firstly because of disturbances in the State of Gujarat and secondly because of tension on the Indo-Pak border and as a result the technicians from USA could not come for alignment and installation of the engine of power plant. Ultimately, as per the proposal of GE, USA, the Company engaged the services of GE-trained Turkish experts from Turkey for re-commissioning of power plant."
- Can we then be assured that Western MNCs would depute their technicians to India to repair sophisticated military gear during war? Do the technical tie-up and joint venture agreements incorporate provisions for uninterrupted supply of vital components and technical services by MNCs in wartime? What would India do if the MNCs violate such provisions, even if incorporated?

The government must resolve such core security concerns while streamlining regulations for private sector participation in manufacture of defence equipment and police armaments – for which a separate policy is in the works.

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Justice with

Like Oscar Wilde, who declared his genius to a customs of

by **Sarita Tanmay**

A JUDGMENT delivered last year in a case concerning the popular word-game of Scrabble perhaps best illustrates the astuteness of the intellect of Sarosh Homi Kapadia, recently appointed Chief Justice of India. The manufacturer of Scrabble had sought tax exemption on the plea that the product was a puzzle and not a game. Kapadia, after considerable research, stated that, in a puzzle, the outcome is pre-determined. Since this is not the case with Scrabble, he deemed it a game.

Kapadia, whose term will last two years and four months, is the first Chief Justice of India to have been born after the end of British rule in 1947. As a young man, long before he became a judge of the Bombay High Court, Kapadia believed that one day he would live in the area where judges live. In 1991, he became a judge and there has been no looking back since.

He was appointed a special judge to prosecute the 1999 stock and securities scam involving broker Ketan Parekh. Later, he also played a vital role in the proceedings of the Joint Parliamentary Committee constituted to investigate the stock scam.

On August 5, 2003, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Uttaranchal High Court. In December the same year, he was elevated to the Supreme Court.

A senior lawyer who has known the 62-year-old judge for many years says, "He believes in perfection and will tolerate no nonsense." Soon after taking over as CJI, Kapadia made headlines for stating that frivolous petitions in the garb of PILs would not be entertained and, as a deterrent, would attract a hefty fine.

Yet, he is not unconcerned about legitimate issues raised in such petitions by the deprived sections of society. The commitment to society enjoined upon a judge and the concept of a socialist society, enshrined in the Preamble to

SHARAD SAXENA

A senior lawyer who has known the 62-year-old judge for many years says, 'He believes in perfection and will tolerate no nonsense.'

n integrity

ıs officer, SH Kapadia sees his integrity as his only asset

Humble beginnings

Justice SH Kapadia grew up in a lower middle-class Parsi family from the Khetwadi-Girgaum part of Bombay. His father was a clerk in a defence establishment, his mother a homemaker. The young Kapadia went to work immediately after completing BA and LLB. Higher education would have been a luxury.

"I come from a poor family. I started my career as a Class IV employee and the only asset I possess is integrity...," he once wrote in a letter to Justice VR Krishna Iyer. He joined a law firm, Gagrat & Co, as a clerk. However, soon after he started working for reputed labour lawyer Feroze Damania.

Around the same time the family moved to Andheri and Sarosh married the girl next door, Shahnaz. Today, they have two grown-up children who have charted their own careers and are not even remotely connected to the legal profession.

the Constitution, are close to his heart.

When Classes III and IV employees of the Supreme Court narrated their tale of hardship and inhospitable working conditions as well as exploitation by superiors, Kapadia announced that he would not avail of the summer holiday but would visit their departments to determine what could be done. "I assure you that I am conscious of your problems. I also worked as a Class IV employee for a short time in a small office in Mumbai," he said.

Not many months ago, he urged all the state governments, the Centre and other authorities to shed tardy procedures as "delay defeats equity". "The court helps those who are vigilant and do not slumber over their rights," a bench headed by Justice Kapadia said while aborting the Maharashtra government's bid to challenge certain land acquisition award cases after the last judgment passed 1,724 days earlier.

"Public interest demands that the State or the beneficiary of acquisition, as the case may be, should not be allowed to indulge in any act to unsettle the settled legal rights accrued in law by resorting to avoidable litigation unless the claimants are guilty of deriving benefits which otherwise are not entitled in law in any fraudulent manner," he said.

Yet, as an expert in corporate law, taxation and investment, he is also conscious of the fact that the judiciary has its limitations and cannot meddle overly with other organs of the State.

WHILE Kapadia upheld the prestigious position of a Governor, saying the latter cannot be treated like a servant by the Central government, he also upheld the majesty of parliamentary democracy. He held that the decisions taken by lawmakers inside the House cannot be adjudicated upon by the judiciary.

These judgments by a man who takes pride in his only asset – integrity – yield a glimpse of a "workaholic" mind. In addition, Kapadia believes in shunning media glare but also using opportunities such as functions to elaborate on issues of public importance.

Kapadia's appointment as CJI has also come as a matter of relief for a large number of mediapersons who were denied interviews by his predecessor, Justice KG Balakrishnan. While Balakrishnan's doors were open to only a select section of the press, an old Kapadia friend assures, "He doesn't discriminate, that much I can say. He respects all readers and viewers." g

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Of HONEY TRAPS and INTELLIGENCE

Historically, from time immemorial sex has been used to entice enemies not only to shed their clothes but also to part with hidden state secrets

by **Col R Hariharan**

THREE decades ago, Michael J Barrett, assistant general counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), called espionage "the world's second oldest profession and just as honourable as the first". This remains true even in this age of permissiveness, and sex continues to be an effective weapon in the armoury of intelligence agencies.

The Old Testament tells us how Philistine spy Delilah used her charms to lure Samson and render him powerless. Our own history has rich tales of spies. Chanakya, the strategic counsellor of emperors, considered spying part of state craft. Akbar was credited with having 5,000 spies working for him. They all used courtesans regularly to lure and kill victims, including foreign spies.

Intelligence agencies use three major human weaknesses – wine, women, and money/power – to make those with access to secrets part with information. The use of sex to lure the victim, known in intelligence parlance as a honey trap, is common among intelligence agencies. Particularly after World War II, when Europe had fewer eligible men, use of sex in intelligence gathering operations gained prominence. And the dreaded Soviet secret service, KGB, used honey traps regularly.

The Profumo affair, involving John Profumo, Secretary of State for War in the Macmillan government in Britain, and Christine Keeler, the British showgirl, is probably the most publicised honey trap case. Keeler's lover, Yevgeni Ivanov, naval attaché at the Soviet embassy in London, probably used her cleverly to get at Profumo and access state secrets though this was never proved. When the scandal broke in 1963, it cost Profumo his job.

In our own neighbourhood, women have frequently been used as tools for spying. The recent arrest of Madhuri Gupta is a case in point.

The KGB used not only women but also men. It used the homosexual inclinations of William John Vassall, a clerk in the British naval attaché's office in Moscow. It trapped him with his male partners and threatened to expose the homosexual liaisons, forcing him to work for the Soviet spy agency.

So it is not surprising that, in our own neighbourhood, women have frequently been used as tools for spying. The recent arrest of Madhuri Gupta (53), Second Secretary in the Press and Information Wing of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad, is a case in point. According to the media, the Pakistan Intelligence Bureau used her occupational grievance against the Ministry of External Affairs to turn her into a spy for Pakistani intelligence. Perhaps sex was also used as icing on the grievance cake as she had an affair with her Pakistani intelligence pointsman, Jamshed. If the media is to be believed, Jamshed, though a member of the "second oldest profession", had some honour left as he offered to marry her!

Gupta's case came close on the heels of another possible honey trap involving Commodore Sukhjinder Singh. The naval officer headed the Indian team overseeing the refit of *Admiral Gorshkov*, the aircraft carrier the Indian Navy is procuring from Russia. The Commodore is now facing an inquiry on whether his liaison with a Russian woman in 2005-07 in Russia had any connections with the Gorshkov deal, which suffered a steep cost hike.

Chinese and US intelligence agencies have also used honey traps to lure Indian

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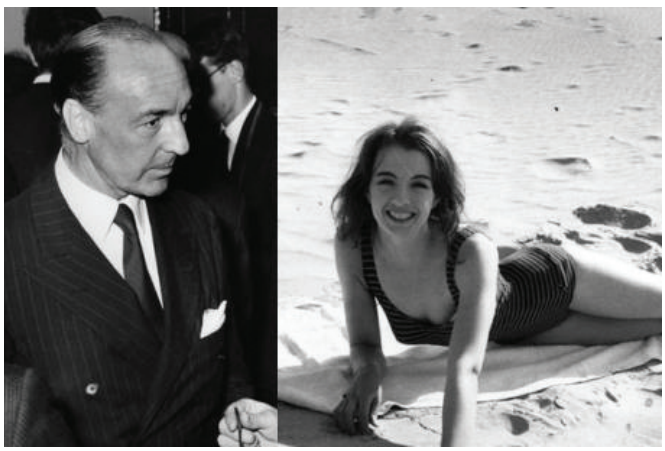
officials. Manmohan Sharma, an officer of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), was dismissed from service after it was discovered that he fell for the charms of his Chinese language teacher during his tenure in Beijing in 2008. The woman was suspected to be an informant of the Chinese government. Three decades ago, there was the notorious case of KV Unnikrishnan, another RAW functionary, who leaked official secrets of India's role in Sri Lanka to the CIA. His liaison with an American woman was said to have played a part.



The Profumo affair, involving John Profumo, Secretary of State for War in the Macmillan government in Britain, and Christine Keeler, the British showgirl, is the most publicised honey trap case.

GOVERNMENTS in the Indian subcontinent operate with a comparatively low level of technology orientation. This imposes limitations on intelligence agencies in the use of sophisticated electronic gadgetry to collect information. Espionage using human sources, rather than technology tools, will continue to be a preferred option to gather state secrets in South Asia. Sex is a major human weakness, making its use in intelligence gathering indispensable. We can expect Pakistani intelligence to continue to exploit all weaknesses in their potential sources to unravel state secrets just as their Indian counterparts do. So use of human intelligence sources continues to have primacy, as Americans are discovering in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

But use of sex for espionage continues to bug the West also. Last year, MI-5, the British counterintelligence agency, distributed a booklet among business and financial institutions on Chinese efforts to use sexual blackmail to unravel business and trade secrets from Western businessmen. It cautioned them about Chinese intelligence services trying to cultivate "long-term relationships" to exploit vulnerabilities such as sexual relationships to force individuals to cooperate with them.

Human intelligence in active military operations has its limitations. As US operations in Afghanistan show, it is being replaced by technology intelligence tools like the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) to provide actionable intelligence in real time. UAVs were extensively used in Sri Lanka's war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Coupled with other battlefield sensors and communication intelligence, such tools play an important role in our own operational theatres, including Jammu and Kashmir.

However, human intelligence will continue to be an indispensable tool of state craft. It is also necessary not only to validate technology intelligence but also probe tools of technology intelligence even when they are still on the drawing board. And the use of sex in espionage and counterintelligence operations will probably continue forever. g

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From the Editor-in-Chief

THIS issue of gfiles is somewhat inspirational. The stories scattered through its pages may appear disparate but, actually, there is a theme. Huh? What do Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Jamia Millia Vice-Chancellor Najeeb Jung have in common? You don't have to look further than the pages of his issue of the magazine to find the answer. Manmohan Singh, in a sober but sterling lecture to the nation's award winning bureaucrats on Civil Services Day ...More

COVER STORY | Civil Services Day

PM'S BACK TO BASICS MESSAGE

Manmohan Singh chose to honour the top achievers by putting the ball of progress squarely in their court

by ANIL TYAGI

AN outsider at Vigyan Bhawan on April 21, 2010 would have scarcely thought he was attending one of the most powerful award distribution ceremonies of the Indian state. Consider the following: there were only three TV crews and six journalists present; national dailies relegated the event to small type on the ba ...More

COVER STORY | Civil Services Da

YEAR OF THE ACHI Individuals

by ANIL TYAGI

REMOVAL of encroachments of a religious nature on public roads and lands without hurting religious sentiments is tough. An anti-encroachment drive was undertaken in Jabalpur district in 2005 by Sanjay Dubey, Collector and District Magistrate, Jabalpur. Several rounds of meetings of the peace committee were held decide the modal ...More

Day

TEAM

OD procurement and ic distribution are two important pillars of the food policy of the Government of India for protecting farmers' and consumers' interests. Chhattisgarh procures over 30 lakh tonnes of paddy every year of Minimum Support Price from more than ers over about 3.5 months. Under this initiative, all processes involved in paddy procurement and PDS have be n fully computerized involving

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rge number of Maoists are lodged. The xplosives were recovered from an area djacent to the district jail. The recovery of ch a huge quantity of explosives indicates wards a big plan of the Maoists.

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FIRST, RIGHT T

The Central and State governments, and the people as a w

by **Col R Hariharan**

In certain States, run by feudal-minded societies, the girl child is sentenced to die in bondage as a worker in fields, bonded labour or domestic help.

HIGH expectations have been kindled with the coming into force of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 from April this year. Education Minister Kapil Sibal's description of it as "a momentous step forward in our 100-year struggle for universalising elementary education" summed up the hype built around it. Only, it should have come eight long years ago when the 86th Amendment to the Constitution was passed, ensuring children's right to education as a fundamental right. Without the RTE Act, the 86th Amendment had remained where most of the other rights of Indians remain – on paper.

When the Amendment was passed, it was called "a historic milestone" in the country's struggle for children's right to education. If "a historic milestone" amendment is given teeth only after eight years, can we expect immediate change in the fate of millions of children deprived of this right?

Passing the RTE Act is not enough; for it to become effective, both states and Centre will have to take a whole set of "mundane" actions – political, legislative and budgetary. The process is somewhat like designing a concept car and marketing it as a viable model. A soothsayer would be as good as any bureaucrat or analyst in predicting when children will gain from the Act.

In certain States, run by feudal-minded societies, the girl child is sentenced to die in bondage as a worker in fields, bonded labour or domestic help. Elected governments are reluctant to enforce existing laws to protect children due to the fear of offending rural vote banks. Caste panchayats continue to flourish as an extra-judicial authority to preserve exploitative practices. They pass death sentences and get away with murder 60 years after we proclaimed our fundamental rights. Vote bank politics is the only ideology.

To give form to RTE is a mammoth task on two counts – the sheer number of marginalized children, and the size and complexity of enforcing the Act in an amorphous federal system where the Centre and states rule over education. Sibal himself admits that though "over 100 per cent children are now in school, 98 per cent of our habitations have a primary school within one kilometre, and 92 per cent have an upper primary school within three kilometres," there are "invisible" children outside this charmed circle. These are kids enrolled in school but who have dropped out to work in *dhaba*s, petty shops or fields. In addition, there are a whole lot of children too poor to go to school or who live in remote areas where access to school is not there.

Realizing the complexity of the task, Sibal has spelled out a whole matrix of actions required to be taken by the various Ministries and governments both at the Central and state level. These are beyond Education Ministries; they range from Rural Development and Panchayati Raj to Women and Child Development departments because secondary initiatives are equally important to make RTE work.

Even within government schools, vast differences exist between Central- and state-managed schools and between urban and rural schools. They range from inadequate infrastructure to insufficient staff and unrealistic policies that drive parents to seek private

T O CHILDHOOD...

s a whole, have to be involved in making the RTE Act work

To give form to RTE is a mammoth task on two counts – the sheer number of marginalized children, and the size and complexity of enforcing the Act.

schools. That is why Sibal has attempted not merely to universalize education, but also to provide quality education and is seeking private sector participation. As the Act provides for 25 per cent reserved seats for poor children in all private schools as well as Central schools, private schools are up in arms.

States that are a little more "enlightened" on education like Kerala or Tamil Nadu have taken advantage of the Constitutional space provided to them in giving jurisdiction over education to States. Their literacy rates have increased dramatically. But the children of Tamil Nadu and Kerala also continue to drop out of school to work as domestic helps or in sweatshops and petty businesses. Tamil Nadu had gained notoriety for killings of girl children. Mothers are known to abandon girl children in government orphanages, creating a new genre of "cradle babies".

Such aberrations exist as there is a large disconnect between legislative action and social perception. That is why many acts of redemption of children from hunger and poverty are announced with a lot of fanfare and then routinely ignored. At best, they taper into nothingness after handing out doles to kids, gestures meant more for photo opportunities for politicians than to make a difference in young lives.

Take the case of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme in Uttar Pradesh. It has been hit by a funds crunch from end-2009 onwards because the state government has not allocated any money for it. The reason: some districts have not submitted the last year's expenditure report! So children everywhere in the state are going without nutritious food promised by the state. More than deprivation of nutrition, such callous acts reinforce in young minds the popular belief that governments generally don't mean what they say. After all, Chief Minister Mayawati could find money to install a thousand statues of her mentor!

THE home truth is that everything in society and government is loaded against children's right to childhood. Many a time, vengeful acts start at the foetal stage just because children belong to the wrong gender. And it has nothing to do with poverty or social status as female foeticide is as much practised by the educated in Punjab as the ignorant in Rajasthan. Not surprisingly, this has led to skewed gender ratios.

And there are other predators: child traffickers who turn them into prostitutes, beggars and petty thieves. Interstate child trafficking is a growing "business", as illustrated by a recent case in Tamil Nadu in which 76 children between 12 and 14 years were rescued from Chennai and sent home to Manipur and Assam after a TV channel followed the trail of 200 children picked up in Manipur and sent to Chennai.

It will be a great achievement if we can give substance to the Right to Education for all children in the next five decades. So it is not only Sibal or the Central and state governments but the people as a whole who have to be involved in making the RTE Act work. And that has to be done in an environment VS Naipaul described as "chaos of uneconomical movement, the self-stimulated din, the sudden feeling of insecurity, the conviction that all men are not brothers and that luggage was in danger". g

general manager (security), airport authority of india | gyaneshwar singh

'The security game will

AVIATION security is looked after by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) in conjunction with airport operators, airlines operators and security agencies. In the late 1990s, setting up of a separate aviation security force was being considered. However, the Kandahar hijack led to immediate deployment of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). Out of over 80 airports under the Airport Authority of India (AAI), the CISF is deployed at 51.

Gyaneshwar Singh (IPS, 1999, HP) was DSP of Una, Kangra, Hamirpur, Solan and Kinnaur districts of HP, and ASP, Chamba, SDPO, Dalhousie and member of Special Investigation Team.

gfiles: *What is the status of airport security?*

Gyaneshwar Singh: There are 80 airports, ranging from ones with just three flights a week to those with hundreds of flights a day. Airports are categorized as non-sensitive, sensitive and hyper-sensitive. We have 13 hyper-sensitive AAI airports and 45 sensitive ones. Our directorate's mandate is basically to supervise and coordinate everything regarding security with the infrastructure and equipment being infused.

The second aspect is manpower-related. It involves coordinating with all the agencies, the CISF and state police. Along with this, the basic security documentation has to be done, training has to be provided and we conduct regular audit and inspections for various facilities at the airport level. We are in a phase witnessing a paradigm shift in terms of structure and legal framework. We have this aircraft security Act but did not have aircraft security rules. Rules are coming up that will specify penalties and areas.

In terms of organizational structure, our regulator, BCAS, is in revamping and expansion mode. When I joined, our set-up included corporate headquarters and regional offices. We have five regional offices, four in metros and one in Guwahati for the Northeast. Though we have been facing economic turmoil like other industries, the management agreed to give security personnel from this directorate to every AAI airport. So we will have a representative of this directorate at every airport in maybe a couple of months. This will strengthen us at the ground level.

RAJEEV DABRAL

So far we have been affecting the policy at corporate headquarters level or maybe interacting with the Ministry and guidelines were being given for airport directors to implement. But it was felt that there was room for improvement. At many airports, there is a multiplicity of agencies. We have airport operators, airlines, various vendors, security agencies, and all the personnel involved have to be trained regularly. Their awareness level has to be high. So this training and updating of certain basic documents like airport security manuals has to be done regularly. These tasks will be handled better when we have our representatives at the airports.

Then, there is the feeling that we should have an Aviation Security Force. We have the Railway Protection Force, so why not an Aviation Security Force?

gfiles: *How does India compare with other countries?*

GS: We have the oldest form of frisking here. But we are going forward in a big way. For example, on the perimeter we have a boundary wall, fence, lighting, watch towers and armed securitymen. Now, airport authorities are going in for parameter intrusion detecting system. The moment somebody climbs this parameter wall, you get a message in the control room, the CCTV follows that person and gives signals to the quick reaction team which follows up.

Advanced technology is being introduced for CCTVs within the terminal buildings also. Then we have people passing through the metal detector after being frisked. Again, frisking is a policy decision by the regulator and the CISF. But abroad you have RTVS (Real Time Viewing Systems), which is a portable X-ray kind of machine. Instead of physically verifying each and every thing, you just view things. Suppose there is an object which is a confirmed threat, you call the bomb disposal squad team from the state police to dispose of the explosive. We will also be going in for remote control vehicles which can pick up the confirmed threat and put it into a container that can contain the blast. There

be more gadget driven'

REUTERS

'Advanced technology is being introduced for CCTVs within the terminal buildings. Then we have people passing through the metal detector after frisking.'

are issues of operational efficiencies and revenue considerations but we are catching up with other countries. But again it's a policy decision and the basic idea is not to compromise on hijack threats. There are privacy issues with body scans and people have objections. So, as per present guidelines, the security personnel are supposed to frisk.

gfiles: *What about your manpower at airports across the country?*

GS: They are supposed to carry their passes. They display passes every time they frisk. When I visit any airport, they frisk me. To get the passes, they need security clearance and antecedents check. Antecedents are not verified for temporary permits of less than three days, for instance for casual labour.

gfiles: *Which airports are under major threat perception?*

GS: Generally, hyper-sensitive and sensitive airports lie in proximity to international border areas, Naxalite-prone areas, Jammu, the Northeast and so on. Now the whole security affair will be more technology-driven and human intervention will be less, monitoring will be more. But reaction and response will always require human intervention.

gfiles: *What kinds of gadgets are you going to have?*

GS: As you must have seen in Delhi, earlier luggage was scanned and tagged and then the passenger would hand it over to the airlines. So there was a chance that, after screening, somebody would put something in a bag. To avoid that, we brought in the inline baggage screening system. The passenger hands over the bag at the beginning and it goes to the respective airlines. This is being adopted at major AAI airports. Another area is BDDS (Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad). We are catering to a whole range of BDDS measures. One area of focus is counter-terrorist measures. We have site contingency plans for terrorism-related activities. Those X-ray and BDDS equipment, quick reaction team vehicles and so on. In terms of vehicles, upgradation is happening. All the airports are being provided with quick reaction teams. Then, perimeter intruder detection systems take care of the perimeters. These are major areas of focus currently. Right now the response mechanism has a mix of the CISF, the state police which is supposed to take care of the periphery or the catchment area, and the National Security Guard. NSG is trained to tackle hijack situations.

gfiles: *Are you developing any model for contingency, considering that you handle 10 million passengers a month? How much deployment is there in airports?*

GS: We have 15,000 or so CISF personnel at all the airports, while the state police should be around 4,000 and then there is the NSG. So 10 million passengers are being handled with 20,000 personnel.

gfiles: *How much do you want to spend on security?*

GS: Apart from AAI's own budget, a component of the passenger's service fee is for security. So we cater to all the needs like salaries, equipment and infrastructure. A control room at the airport with all available technology like biometrics is planned. g

The donkey's SADDLE

Or, a symbol of the feudal mindset of the Indian bureaucracy

by **SHAILAJA CHANDRA**

AMBASSADOR Nigam Prakash (vintage 1966 IFS) tells this story about a souvenir received from a Governor in Tunisia when bidding adieu. He was gifted a donkey saddle with the Governor wishing that his honoured guest would always possess the capacity to rule (the privilege of burdening, beating and kicking people into subjugation). The donkey symbolized the people and the saddle the power to control them. Nigam once used the anecdote to illustrate the attitude of the Indian bureaucracy, which, he felt, embraced the Governor's philosophy.

Let's pick an example – attestation of documents. While I was a serving government officer, I had the authority to attest documents certifying that they were true copies of the original. How many people approached me during the 38 years that I possessed this power? I cannot recall more than 20 occasions when I attested documents. As a rule, I did it for someone I knew directly or a colleague's friend or a friend's friend.

I do not recall a single instance when a stranger sought attestation of documents. There was a very simple reason: how could a stranger ever approach me?

And how many times did I need to get attested copies of documents for myself – proof of residence, ration card, children's mark sheets, driving licence, house tax receipts? Maybe 500 times. If you ask me to recall who attested all those documents for me, I do not know. "Madam's" work just got done.

True, there might be several thousand gazetted officers in the country who would be more accessible to the proletariat than I was but, in the nature of work, gazetted officers function from designated offices. The question of attesting copies for strangers just does not arise. I wonder how the hoi polloi (the donkey) actually persuaded a gazetted officer to attest documents.

What, then, is the logic behind insisting on a gazetted officer's attestation? When the colonial rulers bestowed this legacy, it was founded on the principle of depending only on the dependable. The government's own servants (gazetted because their appointment appeared in the official gazette) were selected by the British because they could be trusted like head boys. But, after Independence, and three decades beyond, the practice continues. Even after photocopiers replaced carbon copies, the need for attestation by a gazetted officer remained unchanged. What if some bounder made 40 per cent look like 90 per cent while photocopying? So the gazetted officer continued to attest photocopies even after they replaced carbon copies.

And then, in the 1990s, came the age of computers. Scanned copies of documents and signatures began to be freely accepted not just for humdrum daily work, but by banks doing global business, by international organizations and even foreign universities. But here in India the gazetted officer continued to attest documents and affix the rubber stamp under his signature. So what if 99 per cent of people did not fudge documents? That was unimportant. The safety of the donkey's saddle was more important to the ruler. The low penetration of computers continues to be spouted as the reason to disallow change even now.

A friend who frequently tours rural areas found that young people, frantic to meet deadlines for admission and job applications, and finding it impossible to get hundreds of attestations done by gazetted officers, had simply dumped this donkey business for monkey business. They merrily stocked the rubber stamps of gazetted officers and signed and stamped the documents themselves, sure that no one would ever find out. Impersonating signatures was the least of their problems.

I once described this absurd situation to a group of officers – some serving, some retired – and argued that this antiquated system of attestation by gazetted officers should be scrapped. Astoundingly, the consensus was that attestation by *marzi* should be replaced by making attestation obligatory.

And how many times did I need to get attested copies of documents for myself – proof of residence, ration card, children's mark sheets....maybe 500 times.

ILLUSTRATION: ARUNA

Specific gazetted officers should be earmarked to perform the functions. "Authenticity should not be compromised," thundered my companions.

IN Europe, the question of attestation of documents just does not arise. Fresh copies are issued by the office that originally issued the document and additional originals are dispatched via the Internet or by post at the price of a coffee. The responsibility for maintaining the data is that of the issuing authority and not of the applicant. How long will it take us to become like that?

Then I recalled a promise made when I was Chief Secretary of Delhi and set about checking what came of it. Imagine my surprise when I found that the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has actually begun issuing birth and death certificates in original and the document can be collected from a convenient delivery point or demanded by courier in seven days flat. That all births and deaths are now registered online by practically all nursing homes and hospitals in Delhi by operating user names and passwords linked to the MCD website. As a result, Delhi claims to have achieved nearly 100 per cent registration of births and deaths, whereas the national registration average is around 60 per cent.

Kudos to the much-maligned MCD!

But, to be realistic, the need for verification of documents cannot be wished away altogether and certainly not in rural areas. The US practice of notaries attesting documents – much like is done here for legal documents – would suit us. A professional notary council should be established, to accredit individual notaries on the lines of chartered accountants and architects. Any hanky-panky committed by a licensed notary would result in his licence being withdrawn and criminal charges of forgery being filed. Every notary throughout the country could be notified on a district website and in tehsil offices along with the fee to be paid for attesting different kinds of documents. The notaries could be allowed to operate from post offices, banks, schools, and community clubs – wherever an organization sees an advantage in having a licensed notary around.

One major caveat, though. This should not mean setting up yet another government office to administer or regulate the attestation of documents with more factotums to sit on the already burdened donkey. In any case, donkeys are fast becoming monkeys and, whatever gazetted officers say, monkey business is what is actually going on. The way out is to begin dispensing originals, at least in the metros, as the MCD has begun doing in a few cases. The originals of ration cards could be taken up next. In the meantime, a professional service provided by licensed notaries should be prescribed for attesting documents at the district and sub-district level. g

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INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT

Get used to shorter booms

DUBAI in October 2009 and Greece now confirms that we are in for more frequent bear markets and the tenure of bull markets is shortening, though we may not actually witness the double dip recession feared by some die-hard pessimists. This very fact may cause the death of the "buy and hold" strategy that most small and retail investors follow. They should therefore enjoy the cyclical rebounds but should not expect the boom to last the way it did during 2004-2008. Emerging markets like India may have witnessed higher growth recently due to the fact that their debts have not been unsustainable, but they need to understand that their markets are not decoupled from the jerks abroad.

After the sub-prime crisis, the world economy is headed for years of much slower growth. This will have a decisive impact on India. A Greece-like problem is quite likely to engulf the US, UK, Europe and Japan. The US is heading for a debt-GDP ratio of 500 per cent, Europe of 434 per cent and Japan of around 200 per cent. If these fiscal imbalances are not addressed through massive austerity measures and spending cuts as also by increasing revenues, they may lead to two options: one, high inflation (for countries borrowing in their own currency) and two, defaults (for countries borrowing from abroad). The austerity measures, of course, will see prolonged periods of slow growth though most governments lack the political will to implement them and thus crisis economics is here to stay. The only solace is that countries like China and India have shown that their domestic demand can sustain respectable growth even in a deep recession.

Though risk of contagion from the Greek crisis is minimal for India due to insignificant trade links, the larger risk to the Indian market comes from the potential fall in risk appetite and possible reversal of risk capital that has been partly funding growth in India. The FIIs' inflows have been the mainstay of the Indian market. This is proved by the fact that the rise of markets in 2009 was mainly led by the $17 billion inflow by FIIs. Also, an outflow of $13 billion in 2008 caused havoc in our market. In the past eight months, it is FII money that has kept our market buoyant with domestic institutions being net sellers and retail investors almost non-existent. If risk aversion increases, it will make it harder for private companies to raise money from the markets or for the government to meet its huge disinvestment target.

However, the crisis can have a sobering impact on inflation in India due to falling commodity prices – crude, metals, and the like – coupled with the prospect of a good monsoon. This may prevent further tightening of interest rates reinforced by buoyancy in tax and non-tax revenues such as auction of the 3G spectrum. Valuations too can add to comfort with another quarter of good performance by the corporate sector. India continues to be a good long-term growth story but global turbulence may impact pace of growth. It may be too much to expect the country to return to 9 per cent plus growth rate, but India will still remain one of the best investment destinations.

Investors are therefore advised to be stock-specific in their investment approach and focus on stocks of companies that have substantial earnings from the domestic markets, as long as the crisis persists. Infrastructure may be another good sector to bet on.

Though contagion from the Greek crisis is minimal for India, the larger risk comes from potential fall in risk appetite and possible reversal of risk capital.

Chambal Fertilizers & Chemicals

(CMP Rs 53)

BELONGING to the KK Birla group, the company is one of the largest private sector fertilizer producers in the country and operates in five segments: own manufactured fertilizers, trading, textile, shipping and others. The others segment includes the yarn and food processing business activities of the company. Its subsidiaries include Chambal Infrastructure Ventures Limited, CFCL Overseas Limited and India Steamship Pvt Ltd.

The consolidated performance of the company during the fiscal ended March 2010 was disappointing. The top-line fell 26 per cent to Rs 4,148.69 crore, while the consolidated bottom-line fell 4 per cent to Rs 217.22 crore but looking to the embedded value of subsidiaries and the expectation of a good monsoon to boost its future prospects, the stock is in for re-rating. A dividend of 19 per cent declared for the FY10 gives a decent yield of 3.5 per cent on the current market price. Investors must accumulate the stock for decent returns over one to two years. g

The author has no exposure in the stock recommended in this column. gfiles *does not accept responsibility for investment decisions by readers of this column. Investment-related queries may be sent to gfilesindia@gmail.com with Dr Sood's name in the subject line.*

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For the complete list, see www.gfilesindia.com

TRACKING

For a complete list of appointments & retirements, see ***www.gfilesindia.com***

KM CHANDRASEKHAR
The 1970-batch IAS officer of the Kerala cadre has been given a one-year extension as Cabinet Secretary and will serve until June 13, 2011.

RATAN KUMAR SINHA
The scientist has taken over as Director of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Trombay.

YOGESH AGRAWAL
The IDBI Chairman has been appointed Chairman of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) .

ANURAG BHUSHAN
The 1995-batch IFS officer has been appointed Regional Passport Officer in Delhi.

YOGENDRA TRIPATHI
The 1985-batch IAS officer of the Karnataka cadre is now the nodal officer to assist the district administration in relief operations at Mangalore airport.

VK GUPTA
The 1977-batch IPS officer of the Gujarat cadre has been appointed Additional Director, CBI.

MANBIR SINGH
The 1976-batch IFS officer has become Secretary at the headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs.

D SURESH
The 1995-batch IAS officer of the Haryana cadre is now Administrator, Haryana Urban Development Authority (HUDA), Faridabad.

NITA KAPOOR
The 1973-batch IDAS officer has been appointed Secretary (Defence Finance).

PRABHAT KUMAR
The 1991-batch IFS officer has been posted as Joint Secretary in the MEA for HOMs Conference.

ISHWAR CHANDAR
The 1991-batch IPS officer has been promoted to IG in Punjab.

ANUP WADHAWAN
The 1985-batch IAS officer of the Uttarakhand cadre has become Principal Resident Commissioner, Delhi.

ALOK
The 1993-batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre has joined the Power Ministry as Director, Transmission.

S MACHENDRANATHAN
The 1979-batch IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre has become Additional Secretary & FA in the Ministry of Steel.

ALKA DEWAN
The 1998-batch IAS officer of the AGMUT cadre has been transferred from Delhi to Daman.

VIRENDRA GUPTA
The 1977-batch IFS officer has been appointed High Commissioner of India to South Africa.

JAGAN MATHEWS
The 1977-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre has been appointed Principal Secretary, Food Processing in Uttar Pradesh.

SUJAY MAZUMDAR
The 1991-batch IFS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre is now Director, Drinking Water.

SK PAL
The 1994-batch IAS officer is now Secretary of the Lokayukta Sangathan in Madhya Pradesh.

V BALACHANDRAN
The 1976-batch IPS officer has been promoted to DG in Tamil Nadu.

SD SHARMA
The 1972-batch IAS officer of the Jharkhand cadre has become Chief State Election Commissioner, Jharkhand.

CHANDRA PRAKASH
The 2004-batch IPS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre has joined as SP, Hathras in Uttar Pradesh.

RN GUPTA
The 1976-batch IPS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre has returned to the Intelligence Bureau as Special Director.

DHARMENDRA SINGH GANGWAR
The 1988-batch IAS officer of the Bihar cadre has joined as CVO of STC.

AJAY CHADHA
The 1977-batch IPS officer of the Union Territory cadre is now Additional Secretary in the Government of India.

ANIL KUMAR
The 1976-batch IAS officer of the Nagaland cadre has become Principal Adviser in the Planning Commission.

Moving On: ias officers retiring in June 2010

ANDHRA PRADESH
K Visweswara Rao (1976)
R Subba Rao (1992)
GR Reddy (1998)

BIHAR
Rajiva Lochan (1993)

GUJARAT
RB Dave (1998)

HARYANA
Sarat Kumar Nanda (1976)
MR Anand (1991)

JHARKHAND
Kanhaiya Pandey (1994)
Mahesh Prasad Sinha (1994)

KARNATAKA
Tara Ajai Singh (1975)

ORISSA
SC Patanaik (1988)
SN Sarangi (1991)
PC Patnaik (1994)

PUNJAB
Bidhi Chand (1990)

SIKKIM
Tobjor Dorjee (1992)

TAMIL NADU
MA Gowrishankar (1973)
R Sellamuthu (1976)

UTTARAKHAND
M Ramachandran (1972)

UTTAR PRADESH
Rama Shankar Sahu (1996)
Shankar Lal Pandey (1996)

Hurrah! www.gfilesindia.com 2,65,000 hits each month and still growing...

RK VAISH
The 1978-batch IAS officer of the Tripura cadre is now Principal Resident Commissioner in Delhi.

MANI ANAND
The 1983-batch IRTS officer has become Executive Director of the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRTC).

DINESH KAPILA
The 1996-batch IES officer has been promoted to Director, Department of Personnel and Training.

KHUSHI RAM
The 1981-batch IRSEE officer has been appointed Chief Vigilance Officer in the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited, New Delhi.

BC NAYAK
The 1975-batch IPS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre is back in the Intelligence Bureau as Special Director.

RITIKA BHATIA
The 1996-batch IA&AS officer has become Director, Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances.

SWATI BANDOPADHYAYA
The 1983-batch IDAS officer has been appointed CVO, IRCON.

AJAY KUMAR
The 1984-batch IDES officer is now Director in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

SACHIN SINHA
The 1995-batch IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre has joined as Director, Census Operations.

SANDEEP CHAKRAVARTY
The 1996-batch IFS officer is now Director in the East Asia Division of the MEA.

GV KRISHNA RAU
The 1982-batch IAS officer of the Karnataka cadre has been appointed Governor of Karnataka.

MOHAN LAL
The 1993-batch IAS officer of the Jharkhand cadre has become AIG, Forests in the Government of India.

JITESH KHOSLA
The 1979-batch IAS officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre has been promoted to Additional Secretary.

SA IBRAHIM
The 1977-batch IPS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre has been empanelled to the rank of Additional Secretary in the Government of India.

SANJEEV CHADHA
The 1988-batch IFS officer has been posted as Director, ST & SC Development.

MADHUP
The Counsellor in the Indian High Commission in London has been moved to the MEA headquarters.

PRITAM B YESHWANT
The 2003-batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre is now Director of the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) for the Rajasthan government.

VILLUR S SESHADRI,
The IFS officer has been appointed the next Ambassador of India to Myanmar.

JANESH
The IFS officer, Third Secretary in Moscow, has been transferred to Kiev.

RAJEEV GUPTA
The former Principal Resident Commissioner has joined as Principal Secretary (PS), Home with the Uttarakhand government.

V RAJGOPALAN
The 1978-batch IAS officer of the UP cadre has assumed charge as Additional Secretary, Chemicals and Petro-chemicals in the Government of India.

T JACOB
The 1984-batch IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre is now Joint Secretary, Food and Distribution.

PK GERA
The 1985-batch IAS officer of the Gujarat cadre has been appointed Joint Director, Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy of Administration, Mussoorie.

PANKAJ AGRAWAL
The 1978-batch IAS officer of the UP cadre is Principal Resident Commissioner (PRC) with the Uttar Pradesh government, Delhi.

TALLEEN KUMAR
The 1987-batch IAS officer of the West Bengal cadre has been appointed Joint Secretary in the Department of Industry Policy and Planning (DIPP).

BD GUPTA
The 1981-batch IRS (IT) officer has been appointed Chief Vigilance Officer in the National Textiles Corporation (NTC), New Delhi.

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Infrastructure development in the form of roads across the area and bridges over the river Bhadra
Development and Maintenance of the Kendriya Vidyalaya.
Our environmental concerns:
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Development of Sanjeevani Vana, a lush heaven on earth
Construction of the Lakya dam to prevent silts entering the River Bhadra
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Verma keeps DD sore festering

WHY is Uday Verma, Special Secretary, Ministry of I&B, an angry man when it comes to Doordarshan? He is noticeably disagreeable regarding any issue related to Doordarshan. The background to this business is that the otherwise genial

Verma (IAS, 1976, Madhya Pradesh cadre) was a candidate for the post of DG, Doordarshan some years ago. He appeared for an interview during KS Sarma's tenure as CEO. He was reportedly grilled for half an hour but the job finally went to Navin Kumar (IAS, 1975). Navin was the only DG, apart from SY Quraishi, who was highly regarded in Doordarshan. It is believed that Verma still nurses that old grudge regarding Doordarshan.

Lalli pop-up jars PM's telecast

AT his recent press conference, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh spoke at length about the UPA's achievements under his leadership. He candidly accepted that corruption was spreading and the state was concerned over it. Now, while all this was being televised live, keeping viewers riveted, an irritation surfaced on the television screen. An inset of another sardar kept appearing.

Some viewers rang up Doordarshan's control room and enquired why the person was being shown repeatedly, to no avail. The person was none other than BS Lalli, CEO, Prasar Bharati. Seated in the front row, this was the opportunity of a lifetime to assert his presence on the national network and associate himself with the Prime Minister.

This manipulation by Lalli and his team in the

news wing has left people baffled at the sheer audacity and unprofessionalism of it all. Will Ambika Soni express helplessness yet again, as she has earlier?

No light at end of coal tunnel

INTERNATIONAL Coal Venture Ltd was set up by the Ministry of Steel to acquire metallurgical coal and steam (boiler) coal assets in selected countries with a special purpose vehicle consisting of NTPC, SAIL, NMDC, RINL and Coal India. The proposed equity base amounted to $0.9 billion and debt to $1.8 billion. Several letters expressing interest in lending mines were received. Senior offi-

cials of PSUs toured the world to locate the best mines. But there was no progress beyond that.

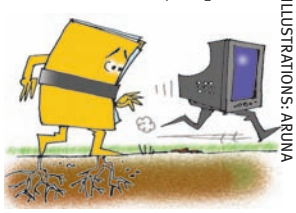
One day, Atul Chaturvedi (Secretary, Steel) received a request from ICVL that an IAS officer on the board be withdrawn as it is an autonomous body. Chaturvedi saw the point and removed the officer. Then, instructions were issued from the top that a big chunk of mines was to be acquired and officials were to tour and submit a report for the acquisition.

Another letter arrived on Chaturvedi's desk, saying an IAS officer should accompany the officials as the latter cannot take decisions suo motu. This has given rise to a quandary. No IAS officer is willing to go on the tour as everyone is in the dark as to why ICVL wants an IAS officer from the Ministry when it had earlier sought an officer's removal.

Hard drive for soft files

WIn the corridors of power, the days of "file movement" are seemingly numbered. Some time ago, Prajapati Trivedi, who is Secretary, Performance Management in the Cabinet Secretariat, happened to visit Achal Kumar Jyoti, Chief Secretary, Gujarat. Trivedi noticed an absence of files in the latter's office. He asked about it. "We have done away with physical movement of files, now files are routed through computers. At meetings, officials bring their laptops," explained Jyoti.

This was an eye-opener



ILLUSTRATIONS: ARUNA

for Trivedi, who also sought a paperless office but had not been able to come up with a solution. He called the National Informatics Centre officials and issued instructions. Swift implementation followed and now the offices of the Cabinet Secretariat and the Secretary, Performance Management have done away with the bane of "file movement". Now it's the turn of the Ministries. g

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HOLIDAY INN	-@ 13,999/-*
MAJORDA BEACH RESORT	-@ 14,777/-*
RAMADA CARAVELA BEACH RESORT	-@ 14,999/-*
CIDADE DE GOA	-@ 16,999/-*
TAJ FORT AGUADA BEACH RESORT	-@ 16,999/-***
ALILA DIWA	-@ 17,555/-***
TAJ HOLIDAY VILLAGE	-@ 18,555/-***

Incl.: Return Airfare, Stay per person 3 nights 4 days, All meals, Transfers, Sightseeing, all taxes. ***No Sightseeing.

WEEKEND GETAWAYS 2N/3D

Mussoorie	—	Mussoorie Hill House	Rs. 4,750/-*	MAP
Mussoorie	—	Avalon Resorts	Rs. 7,499/-	MAP
Shimla	—	Radisson Jass	Rs. 8,999/-	MAP
Shimla	—	Bridge View	Rs. 3,499/-	MAP
Corbett	—	Infinity Resorts	Rs. 5,999/-	AP
Corbett	—	Quality Inn The Den	Rs. 4,555/-	AP
Jaipur	—	Holiday Inn	Rs. 2,999/-	CP
Nainital	—	Chevrons fairheavens	Rs. 4,777/-*	MAP
Nainital	—	Vikram Vintage	Rs. 7,500/-	MAP
Kanatal	—	The Terraces	Rs. 8,250/-*	MAP
Ranikhet	—	Woods Villa	Rs. 4,277/-*	MAP

Incl.: Stay Per person, Meals as per plan and All taxes.
CP-Only Breakfast/MAP-Breakfast & Dinner/AP - All Meals * Taxes extra

VOLVO PACKAGES

MANALI 3N/4D

Hotel Harmony	-	@ 5,555/-
Hotel Zaanto Manali	-	@ 6,444/-
The Orchard Green	-	@ 7,333/-
Apple Country Resort	-	@ 8,999/-
Mapple River Crescent	-	@ 8,999/-
Quality Inn River Country	-	@ 9,111/-

Incl.: Delhi - Manali - Delhi Volvo tickets, Stay per person, Accommodation, Breakfast & Dinner, All Taxes.

SRINAGAR

3N/4D **Rs. 5,333/-***

(Day Trip to Gulmarg)

Incl.: Stay per person with Breakfast & Dinner, S/s, all taxes

SIKKIM

4N/5D **Rs. 7,888/-***

2 Nts. Darjeeling, 2 Nts. Gangtok

Incl.: Stay per person with Breakfast, Sightseeing, all taxes

KERALA

5N/6D **Rs. 8,999/-***

1 Nt Cochin, 2 Nts Munnar, 1 Nt Thekkady & 1 Nt Alleppey

Incl.: Stay per person, Breakfast, Sightseeing by A/c Indica, all taxes

*Conditions Apply * Taxes as applicable * Rates are subject to change.

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